

TOP SECRET [REDACTED]

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25X1Talking Points for the DCI
(17 October 1983)

The continued sniping at US Marine positions around Beirut International Airport probably is not the result of coordinated efforts by any of the major combatants.

- Amal leader Nabih Barri does not control all Shia fighters in Beirut's southern suburbs.
- Some Shia belong to the Iranian-backed Islamic Amal militia, a prime suspect in the incidents.
- Radical Palestinians may also be responsible. [REDACTED] reports that 50 fighters from the PFLP-GC and the dissident faction of Fatah led by Abu Musa, had infiltrated into Beirut as of 8 October.

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- The Druze do not appear to be involved. [REDACTED]

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Beside the evident anti-US motivation behind the incidents, radical factions may be trying to to prevent the airport area from being the venue of the reconciliation conference.

- Attacks on Lebanese Army positions on the northern perimeter of the airport have also increased. [REDACTED]

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Desultory fighting continues along the Alayh ridgeline between the Lebanese Army and Druze/Palestinian forces.

- The Army is trying to gain control of Druze towns behind its lines and deny the use of the roads in the Kayfun/Baysur area to the opposition.
- The major Palestinian force in the area appears to be the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. [REDACTED]

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The Lebanese Forces Christian militia continue to clash with the Druze militia in the Kharrub area south of Damur, and reportedly have been provoking incidents with the Shia in Sidon.

- The Shia, like the Druze, have demanded a complete withdrawal of Lebanese Forces militiamen from South Lebanon.
- A senior Amal leader recently expressed Shia concern that the cease-fire would break down before the end of October triggered by Christian/Shia confrontations in Sidon and Jazzin.
- A Lebanese Forces leader, however, declared Sunday that the militia was on the verge of withdrawing from South Lebanon. [REDACTED]

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A venue has still not been selected for the national reconciliation conference. Former President Franjiah has apparently agreed, however, to drop his demand that the Lebanese/Israeli withdrawal agreement be abrogated before he attended the conference.

-- According to press reports, the reconciliation conference--scheduled to start on Thursday--may be delayed several days if a meeting site is not agreed upon by tomorrow. [REDACTED]

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